

# ARPA Broadband Grant Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated February 21, 2022

Most recently updated items:

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## 1. GENERAL

- a. *How often will the FAQ be updated and where will it be available?*
  - The FAQ will be updated as necessary and is linked on the PSC Broadband Expansion Grants web page. New items will be listed at the time, and each iteration is dated.
- b. *How do we contact the Commission with questions or concerns about the ARPA broadband grant program?*
  - Please contact the Commission at [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov) with questions or concerns about the ARPA broadband grant program.
- c. *How long does the Grant Agreement last?*
  - The period of performance ends 12.31.2024, but there are close out and reporting items that extend up to two years following this date.
- d. *What is the ARPA Broadband Expansion Grant project FAIN number?*
  - We do not yet have a FAIN assigned for the ARPA grants. Once one is assigned, we will let all subrecipients know as soon as possible.

## 2. GRANT AGREEMENTS

- a. *How long does the Grant Agreement last?*
  - The Grant Agreement identifies that the performance period is to be completed by December 31, 2024. The terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement remain in effect until the grant recipient has completed all grant agreement requirements, such as reporting requirements after the performance period. As a result, the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement extend beyond the completion of the performance period.
- b. *What if we cannot complete the performance period by December 31, 2024.*
  - Please contact the Commission at [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov) with concerns about meeting the performance period deadline. An extension of the performance period beyond December 31, 2024 may be available following the Commission's standard grant amendment process. Please note, the Department of Treasury requires all federal funding to be obligated by December 31, 2024.
- c. *Does the Davis-Bacon Act (referenced in Attachment A, page 21 of the Grant Agreement) apply to my project(s)?*
  - The Davis-Bacon Act applies to contracts in excess of \$2,000 for construction, alteration, or repair of public buildings or public works and which require or involve the employment of mechanics or laborers. Additionally, the Department of Treasury requires certification or reporting related to Davis-Bacon Act wage information for grant projects with a total anticipated cost of over \$10,000,000. Grant recipients and subrecipients should work with their legal counsel to determine whether the Davis-Bacon Act and Department of Treasury certification and reporting requirements apply to their grant project.

- d. *Section 24.0 (Page 11) of the Grant Agreement states that we must notify the Commission of public statements, press releases, marketing or promotional materials describing the grant project. What is the notification and review process? How long will review take?*
- Please submit a copy of public statements, press releases, and marketing or promotional materials to [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov) prior to publication.
  - The Commission will review the material and will request changes if necessary. You do not need to wait for review and approval prior to publication.
  - Statements, press releases, and marketing or promotional materials describing the grant project must comply with the provisions in section 24.0 of the Grant Agreement. The calculation of the percentage of the total cost of the project financed with federal funds should be based on the projected total cost of the grant project identified in the Grant Agreement at the time of the statement.
- e. *What is the scope of the lien consent requirement in section 19.0 of the Grant Agreement?*
- Section 19.0 of the Grant Agreement applies to funding sources associated with the grant project. This includes federal funding and grant recipient matching funding. If you intend to create a new lien, you must inform the Commission of your intent to create a lien and receive written consent from the Commission prior to lien creation. Requests for lien creation consent should be submitted to [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov).
- f. *If my company merges with or is purchased by another company, does the Grant Agreement still stand?*
- No, the Grant Agreement does not automatically transfer to a new company. Section 19.0 of the Grant Agreement requires prior written consent of the Commission for transfer of the grant project to a new company. You must notify the Commission if your company is to merge with or be purchased by another company in order to continue receiving grant funds. Requests for Commission approval should be submitted to [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov). If approved, the Commission will work with relevant parties to amend the grant agreement as necessary.
- g. *Section 4.7 of the Grant Agreement states that recipients must “Submit one copy of the audit or letter confirming that the audit requirements are not applicable via email to [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov).” Is this requirement only for recipients falling under 4.1?*
- No, section 4.7 of the Grant Agreement applies to all grant recipients.
- h. *When is a Grant Agreement amendment needed?*

- An amendment is required when a significant changes in the grant project's scope, budget, or timeline occurs. Examples of potential significant changes include:
  - A change in the Project or activities, as described in Attachment B – Project Scope.
  - Any change in the list of expenses, contributions or in-kind, as described in Attachment C – Project Budget.
  - A transfer of funds among cost categories that exceeds or is expected to exceed twenty (20) percent of the approved total project Budget.
  - A significant change to the anticipated project timeline, such as to extend the performance period.

Please work with the Commission to determine whether changes to a grant project's scope, budget, or timeline are significant and require an amendment. Questions and requests relating the Grant Agreement amendment should be submitted to [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov).

- i. *Do contractors/subcontractors need to complete the affirmative action documentation?*
  - Direct contractors to the subrecipient will need to complete affirmative action documentation. Any organizations working as subcontractors to these direct contractors will not need to complete the documentation.

### 3. TRAINING

- a. *Will there be any webinars or trainings held for the ARPA broadband grant program?*
  - Yes, the Commission intends to provide ARPA broadband grant program trainings in 2022. Grantees will be notified of trainings as they are scheduled. Trainings will cover topics such as reimbursement requests and reporting requirements. Please submit any requests for additional trainings to [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov).
- b. *What other kind of training/help is available?*
  - If you have questions or need assistance generally, please contact our team at [PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCFederalBroadbandGrantReimbursement@wisconsin.gov) and we will be happy to work with you / your team to assist with your questions.

### 4. REPORTING

- a. *Are the interim reporting requirements for the ARPA broadband grant projects different from previous broadband grant projects?*
  - Yes, ARPA broadband grant project interim reports will require more information than previous broadband grant projects did. An outline of required information can be found in Attachment D of the Grant Agreement, on page 24.
- b. *Will there be a new interim report template for the ARPA grants?*
  - Yes, an interim report template is forthcoming.
- c. *How often will we need to provide interim reports?*

- Interim reports are required to be submitted quarterly. A reporting schedule is forthcoming.
  - d. *Will we need to file reports with the federal government?*
    - No, grantees should submit reports to the Commission through ERF.
5. REIMBURSEMENTS
- a. *What is a cash match versus and in-kind match?*
    - There are two kinds of **match**, a cash match and in-kind match. A **cash match** is the direct project expense you or your non-federal partner provides as your contribution to the project – your cash expenditures for costs related to this specific project, such as project-related staff salaries, consultant’s fees, equipment rentals and travel costs. **In-kind match** are materials and services, secretarial services, space and utilities, equipment, sometimes waived fees and technical assistance provided by your organization or donated by a non-federal third party specifically for this project.
  - b. *What kind of documentation does the PSC need for a cash match?*
    - A cash match requires the same type of documentation that a reimbursement request requires.
  - c. *How do we represent cash and in-kind matches on the reimbursement request?*
    - Each budget category will have a section for grant funds and a section for matching funds. Both in cash match and in-kind match invoices should be listed in the match section. You will not need to differentiate between cash and in-kind match on the reimbursement request form. However, you will need to report and differentiate between the two on quarterly reports.
  - d. *How do I determine which budget category to place expense in?*
    - There are seven budget categories. You can find each category and its description on the [PSC website](#) (Resources for Current Federal Broadband Grant Recipients/Reimbursement/Budget Categories)
  - e. *Can grant funds be used to reimburse labor expenses of the owner?*
    - Recouping of salary is limited to actual wages paid. If you own your business and pay yourself hourly wages, you may use grant funds to reimburse these expenses when included in the project budget.

## 6. ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY

- a. *Where do I find 35 CFR § 35.6(e)(2)(i)(C) that requires ARPA subrecipients to offer ACP or equivalent low-income pricing in the area I’m building out/connecting?*
  - You can find the Federal Register language here 35 CFR § 31.6(e)(2)(i)(C) <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/01/27/2022-00292/coronavirus-state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds> and you can find the summary language of the Final Rule and the ACP or equivalent plan language at (<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule.pdf>) (page 308). This requirement will be incorporated into the CFR when it goes into effect on April 1, 2022.